

TIPS FOR PREPARATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The County Administrator desires that major activities proposed for action by the Board of Supervisors be transmitted to the Board as an agenda item and the decision on those items be manifested by the Board in the form of a resolution. It is further desired that the resolutions be prepared in a standard format to facilitate the processes of agenda preparation and decision-making.

The resolution should be a “stand-alone” document. One should be able to pick it up, read it, and understand from that reading what actions are being proposed and by whom, what, when, where, why, and how. This does not mean that every resolution has to be a book, but it should be complete and explanatory. Years from now, one should be able to ascertain what action was taken based on the resolution. Attached are several examples of resolutions prepared in the standard format. Please refer to them to get an indication of the format and styling.

It is important to make clear the purpose and intent of resolutions as they pertain to the operations of the Board of Supervisors. Every official action taken by the Board becomes a matter of historical record. They also have a bearing on the operations of many departments, agencies, and other organizations. It is critical that such actions be understood by the Board members prior to adoption; recorded properly after adoption; and implemented as intended. A well prepared resolution facilitates that process and assists the Board of Supervisors in making decisions.

- The heading of the resolution should be a description of the proposed action. It should be brief, yet it should describe the topic and or purpose of the resolution. It begins with the phrase: “A RESOLUTION TO...” The heading should coincide with the “RESOLVED” clause which contains the proposed actions for the Board to take.
- The “WHEREAS” clauses (or Preamble) contain as much information as is necessary to support the actions proposed to be taken in the “RESOLVED” clauses. If building a case for continuing action, the “WHEREAS” clauses are structured as a sequence of events of previous actions so that the reader can clearly see what has transpired in the past and why the proposed actions are a natural or logical continuation. If in support of a one-time project or program, give enough information in the “WHEREAS” clauses to provide a reasonable justification for the actions proposed in the “RESOLVED” clauses.
- The “RESOLVED” clauses follow the theme presented in the heading and the Preamble and specify the actions directed or requested by the Board of Supervisors. The resolution may have one “RESOLVED” clause or it may have several, depending on the nature of the issue and the preciseness that the author and the Board deem necessary to obtain clear direction and understanding.